



## U.S. EMBASSY PRAGUE AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES NEWSLETTER

Trziste 15, 118 01 Prague 1

April 2013

### Traveling With Children

#### **Parental consent for a child traveling with one parent or someone who is not a parent or legal guardian**

If a child (under age 18) is traveling with only one parent or someone who is not the child's parent or legal guardian, what paperwork should the adult have to indicate permission or legal authority to have that minor in their care?

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) strongly recommends that in these situations the traveling adult has a letter of consent from the absent parent or legal guardian.

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### Greetings from ACS

Despite the misleading frigid temperatures, the summer travel season is just around the corner.

Now is a good time to check the expiration dates of your U.S. passports so that you have time to renew them before you have a need to travel.

We always like to hear from you, too. If you have suggestions for items you would like us to include in future editions of this newsletter, please let us know.

Best regards,

Charles Jess  
Consul General

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## Worldwide Caution



The Department of State has issued a Worldwide Caution to update information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world. U.S. citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This announcement replaces the Worldwide Caution issued by the Department on July 18, 2012, to provide updated information on security threats and terrorist activities worldwide.

Full text of the Worldwide Caution is available on the State Department's [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) website at the following link: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/pa/pa\\_4787.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_4787.html)

As the Department continues to develop information on any potential security threats to U.S. citizens overseas, it shares credible threat information through its consular information program documents, available on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>.



U.S. citizens living and traveling abroad are reminded to always review their credit card receipts prior to signing for purchases. The Embassy has received reports of incidents when travelers did not realize an extra zero had been added to the price of their purchase. It is more difficult to contest a fraudulent charge once you have signed your receipt and returned to the United States.

**If you are a victim of this type of scam contact your credit card company immediately.**



## **U.S. Department of State Careers App**

The U.S. Department of State has launched a new mobile app for those interested in Foreign Service careers. The app, available on Apple and Android devices, educates and engages Foreign Service candidates and others seeking to familiarize themselves with diplomatic careers.

The DOSCareers app offers essential information right at the users' fingertips: Foreign Service Specialist and Officer career path descriptions, video interviews with diplomats, profiles of embassy life, information about selection and hiring processes, and more than 500 retired Foreign Service Officer Test questions which quiz your knowledge of topics including U.S. government and culture, world history, technology, and economics.

You can also learn more about the opportunities and experiences of those who have chosen this career, as well as find a recruitment event, or contact a Diplomat in Residence near you.

For further information or to download the app please go to the Department's career page at: <http://careers.state.gov/doscareers>



### **Embassy Holiday Closures**

**During the month of May U.S. Embassy Prague will be closed on the following days in recognition of Czech and U.S. holidays:**

**Wednesday, May 1, 2013 - Labor Day (Czech Holiday)**  
**Wednesday, May 8, 2013 - Liberation Day (Czech Holiday)**  
**Monday, May 27, 2013 - Memorial Day (U.S. Holiday)**

## **LGBT Travel Information**

Attitudes and tolerance toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons vary from country to country, just as they vary among U.S. cities and states. Most LGBT travelers encounter no problems while overseas, but it helps to be prepared and research your destination before you go.

There are a number of countries that provide legal protections to those who are LGBT. Unfortunately, there are others that do not, and a significant number that even criminalize consensual same-sex sexual relations. Persons convicted in these countries could be sentenced to prison, and/or be punished by fines, deportation, flogging, or even sentenced to death. Before choosing one's international destination, LGBT travelers should carefully consider the laws and biases of their international destination and decide how open one can be regarding one's sexual orientation or gender identity. Personal judgment and knowledge of local laws and customs before one goes will help ensure your safety.

The Department of State has recently published an **LGBT Travel Information** page providing travel and safety tips, and addressing many of the questions frequently asked by members of the LGBT community when traveling abroad. This page supplements information located on the Department's **Tips for Traveling Abroad** page.

International travelers are also encouraged to consult the State Department's Country Specific Information pages prior to traveling overseas.

**By fighting for the rights of so many others, we realize that "gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights."** Secretary Clinton – December 6, 2011

### **Need a criminal record check for your Czech visa or Živnostenský list?**

Documentation on criminal record checks are provided by the Embassy through an affidavit signed by the U.S. citizen and notarized at the Embassy by a Consular Officer. Under certain circumstances, this sworn statement affirming that you have no criminal history is accepted by the Czech Government. Please confirm this requirement with the appropriate Czech Government office related to your needs. The fee for this notarial service is \$50.00 USD.

Appointments for routine services such as non-emergency passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, extra passport pages, and **notarial services** are available Monday through Friday between the hours of 0830 AM and 1130 AM. Appointments may be made online by visiting our reservation system at <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=PRG&appcode=1>

Please visit our website for additional information: <http://prague.usembassy.gov>.

## Public Comment Period for New Overseas Voting Forms



The Federal Voting Assistance Program has announced via the Federal Register the public comment period for proposed revisions to the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB). These documents are used by overseas voters to register and vote in U.S. elections. The voting public is invited to submit comments on the proposed changes as outlined below.

**Public comments are invited on:**

- (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility;
- (b) The accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection;
- (c) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (d) Ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

**To view the Federal Register notices please go to:**

FPCA: <https://federalregister.gov/a/2013-07485>

FWAB: <https://federalregister.gov/a/2013-07486>

**To view the draft forms and submit comments please go to:**

FPCA: <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=DOD-2013-OS-0061>

FWAB: <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=DOD-2013-OS-0065>



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## Traveling With Children (continued from page 1)



Due to the increasing incidents of child abductions in disputed custody cases, U.S. Customs and Border Protection recommends that unless the child is accompanied by both parents, that the adult have a note from the child's absent parent (or, in the case of a child traveling with grandparents, uncles or aunts, sisters or brothers, or friends, a note signed by both parents) stating "I acknowledge that my wife/husband/etc. is traveling out of the country with my son/daughter. He/She/They has/have my permission to do so."

U.S. Customs and Border Protection also suggests that this note be notarized.

While the Customs and Border Protection Officer may not ask to see this documentation when the child enters the U.S., if they do request such evidence, and you do not have it, you may be detained until the circumstances of the child traveling without both parents can be fully assessed.

### **What should a parental consent/permission letter look like? Is there a Customs and Border Protection form?**

There is not a Customs and Border Protection Form letter, however, the parental consent letter should include: **Who, What, Where, When, Why**, and **contact information** for the absent parent(s).

Having the letter notarized is not necessary but highly recommended. For frequent border crossers, the letter should not exceed one year. It is recommended to have the letter in English.

If there is no second parent with legal claims to the child (deceased, sole custody, etc.) any other relevant paperwork, such as a court decision, birth certificate naming only one parent, death certificate, etc., would be useful.

Adults traveling with children should also be aware that, while the U.S. does not require this documentation, many other countries do; failure to produce notarized permission letters and/or birth certificates could result in travelers being refused entry in some countries.

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**Contact American Citizen Services**

**ACSPRG@state.gov**

**Open 8:30AM -12:00 PM Monday through Friday**

**By appointment only (except for emergencies)**

**<http://prague.usembassy.gov>**

**420-257-022-000**